

Appln. No. 10/723,797  
Amendment dated December 17, 2004  
Reply to Office Action of September 22, 2004

**Amendments to the Claims:**

Please amend claim 1 as follows. The following listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

**Listing of Claims:**

Claim 1 (Currently Amended). A connector for ~~being connected~~ connection to a mating connector having a recess, comprising:

a housing;

5 a locking member provided on an outer peripheral surface of said housing, said locking member including a fixed portion fixed to said housing, an engaging portion for engagement with the recess of the mating connector, and a spring portion for urging said engaging portion toward the recess; and

10 spring force-increasing means for inhibiting said engaging portion from moving ~~more than a predetermined distance~~ when said spring portion is bent by a predetermined quantity using said fixed portion as a support, and causing said spring portion to be bent using said engaging portion as a support.

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Claim 2 (Original). A connector as claimed in claim 1,  
wherein said housing has a hollow cylindrical shape, and has an  
accommodating space formed therein for accommodating said spring  
portion and said engaging portion when said spring portion is

5 bent,

the connector further comprising a sliding member mounted on  
an outer peripheral surface of said locking member in a manner  
slidable in an axial direction of said housing, said sliding  
member having a window for permitting said engaging portion to  
10 escape therein such that said engaging portion can be engaged  
with the recess of the mating connector when the connector is  
fitted to the mating connector.

Claim 3 (Original). A connector as claimed in claim 2,  
wherein said spring force-increasing means is a stepped portion  
formed in said housing in a manner protruding into said  
accommodating space.

Claim 4 (Original). A connector as claimed in claim 2,  
wherein said spring force-increasing means is a protruding .

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portion formed on a bottom surface of said engaging portion in a manner protruding into said accommodating space.

Claim 5 (Original). A connector as claimed in claim 2, wherein said spring force-increasing means is a ring which is wound around said housing in a manner opposed to said engaging portion in a radial direction of said housing.